

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: ASSET JOINT FUNDER MEETING NEXT STEPS

BACKGROUND:

On May 1, the City Council met with other ASSET funders to discuss the funders' expectations and vision for the ASSET partnership. The funders discussed 1) how they set their ASSET priorities, 2) their expectations for recording outcomes through the Clear Impact Scorecard, 3) overall funder expectations for the ASSET process, and 4) other items to explore further to improve the ASSET process.

Following the meeting, ASSET staff convened to discuss the thoughts shared by the funders. ASSET staff has prepared a memo (attached), which summarizes the consistent themes staff believes emerged from the discussion. These include:

1. **There are limitations to ASSET funds** – This theme relates to the idea that ASSET funding should not be the first or only source of support for a program
2. **Integrate a needs assessment into ASSET** – Using an existing or new assessment, needs in the community would be identified in a more objective manner. An assessment could also guide funder priority-setting, volunteer decision-making, and the establishment of appropriate outcomes
3. **Establish shared funder priorities** – Using a common assessment tool, the funders could either develop priorities jointly or use consistent language to develop their priorities individually
4. **Establish core services and supplemental services** – The funders identified that certain services are more critical to support than others. The funders can establish priorities in a manner that identifies the core services that should be more consistently funded from year-to-year, and a set of supplemental services for which funding may fluctuate more depending on funder priorities
5. **Establish shared outcomes** – Through a shared priority-setting process, the funders may be better able to establish clear outcomes to be measured.

The funders are now requested to either confirm those themes or clarify them. Because of the challenges associated with convening another joint funders meeting, the

funders are being asked individually to provide their feedback. If it appears the funders have fundamentally different interpretations of the directions staff should explore, then ASSET staff would work to convene another joint funder meeting to clarify.

Once there is consensus among the funders regarding these overall concepts, ASSET staff will use them to develop more substantial action steps, including alternatives, analysis of those alternatives, and recommendations to achieve the objectives outlined in the themes. Once alternatives are determined, the funders will have an opportunity to decide whether to implement changes to the ASSET process or to leave these aspects of ASSET as-is.

ALTERNATIVES:

6. Confirm these themes and direct staff to work with other funders to develop an action plan to align the ASSET process with these concepts.
7. Amend these themes and direct staff to communicate the Council's position to other funders for concurrence.
8. Direct staff to work with other funders to host another joint funder meeting to discuss the next steps.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The themes outlined in the attached memo and summarized above reflect the viewpoints ASSET staff believes were raised consistently by the joint funders during their May 1st meeting. If the joint funders all agree that these themes reflect their interests, ASSET staff will develop an action plan, including timeframes, alternatives to explore, analysis, and recommendations, which will be used to pursue these themes. The funders would have further opportunities to decide whether to implement changes to the ASSET process to achieve the desired themes.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby confirming the themes described above and directing staff to work with other funders to develop an action plan to align the ASSET process with these concepts.

ASSET

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MEMO

To: ASSET Joint Funders
From: ASSET Staff
Date: May 13, 2019
Subject: **Themes and Next Steps from May 1 ASSET Joint Funder Meeting**

The ASSET Joint Funders met to discuss their expectations and vision for ASSET on May 1st. After the meeting, ASSET staff met to review the themes that emerged and propose next steps. The themes from the discussion consisted of the following:

1. Limitations of ASSET Funding

ASSET funding should be used as a source of last resort, and should not be the primary source of funding for an agency or service. It should not replace lost grants or reduced state/federal funds. ASSET funds should support existing services before being used for new proposals, but should only go to existing services if the service continues to be justified.

2. Integrate an Assessment into the Process to Guide ASSET Decisions

Use an assessment to identify the needs in the community, develop funder priorities, make funding decisions, and establish outcomes. This assessment would provide a common set of data for funders and agencies to make decisions. It could be a new or existing assessment process (e.g., Five-Year Community Health Needs Assessment conducted by the Story County Quality of Life Alliance). There would be less emphasis on anecdotal evidence from the agencies in the future.

3. Establish Shared Funder Priorities

Using a common needs assessment, funders could establish shared priorities, or priorities that use a common set of language.

4. Establish Core Services and Supplemental Services

Certain services are of utmost importance to the funders. These services could form a core set of services which do not vary from year-to-year, while funders could also identify supplemental services that may be more dynamic from year-to-year. This is similar to how Central Iowa Community Services (CICS) distinguishes its services.

5. Establish Shared Outcomes

Funders can use the shared priorities to guide decisions about outcomes that should be measured and achieved.

This list is ASSET staff's impression of concepts that were raised routinely through the May 1 discussion. Because of the joint nature of the ASSET partnership, the ASSET funders need to determine together how to proceed. Since holding a joint funders meeting requires many weeks' notice, it is staff's hope that the funders can individually review this memo with their respective staff persons and discuss their desired next steps. **Therefore, the funders are being asked to review these themes and identify whether they:**

- A. **Agree with the themes and wish for ASSET staff to proceed with developing an action plan to align ASSET with these concepts.** This action plan would outline alternatives, recommendations, and a timeframe for accomplishing the changes. The funders would have further opportunities to consider the implications of the various proposals before committing to any changes. It is likely such changes would need to be implemented over several years.
- B. **Disagree with the themes and wish to amend them.** If the proposed changes are minor, ASSET staff will communicate the revisions to each of the funders and request approval to proceed with the revised themes.
- C. **Wish to hold another joint funders meeting to discuss the themes and next steps.** ASSET staff will recommend this alternative if the funders appear to have significant disagreements about the themes captured on the first page of this memo.